

Florida House of Representatives

Democratic Office

Franklin Sands
Democratic Leader

Geraldine F. Thompson
Democratic Leader Pro Tempore

January 20, 2010

The Honorable Larry Cretul, Speaker
Florida House of Representatives
402 South Monroe Street
420 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Dear Speaker Cretul:

The Florida House Democratic Caucus wishes to participate constructively in a fiscally responsible budget process. Unfortunately, the process prescribed by the House Republican leadership is fundamentally flawed.

We ask you to join us in a more meaningful approach. We need to review our state's critical mission and priorities, and its ability to finance these programs and services. The majority party's budget exercise fails to take a common-sense approach of simultaneously evaluating both the state's revenues and expenditures.

We ask that you work with us in creating a more meaningful method of reviewing the state's priorities and its ability to fund critical programs and services. Conducting joint meetings of the House Finance & Tax Council and the House Appropriations Council will yield a more productive discussion about the state's budget process.

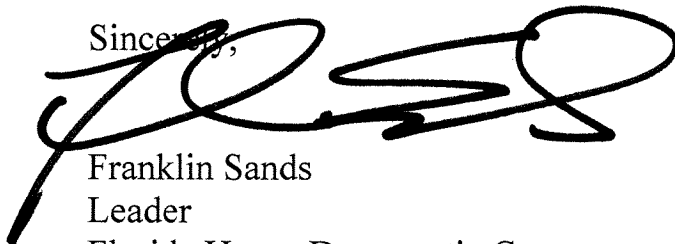
We need a holistic budget process that will result in a clear plan to get Florida through its current crisis while laying the foundation for economic recovery, job growth and better opportunities for Floridians.

Without agreement on a comprehensive approach, we cannot participate in a futile exercise of identifying cuts. We call on the House leadership to:

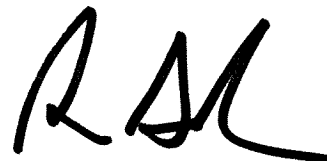
- Embrace an open and transparent budget process without secret budget meetings, and participation by all interested members;
- Conduct joint meetings of the House Finance & Tax Council and the full Appropriations Council in reviewing both revenues and expenditures;
- Reject raiding state trust funds because doing so hurts Florida's economic recovery. Last year, House Democrats opposed the raids on many trust funds, such as ones meant to protect financing for affordable housing and transportation projects.

We look forward to working cooperatively to develop a fiscally responsible state budget. We appreciate your consideration of our position and look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Franklin Sands
Leader
Florida House Democratic Caucus



Ron Saunders
Democratic Ranking Member
House Appropriations Council



Perry Thurston, Jr.
Democratic Ranking Member
House Finance & Tax Council



Keith Fitzgerald
Policy Chair
House Democratic Caucus

cc: Representative David Rivera
Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff